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ABSTRACT

In an effort to improve educational institutions' recruitment and retention of undergraduate students of color, particularly members of underrepresented groups, a self-assessment guide was produced by a group of large public research universities. Common patterns of challenges and opportunities at the various institutions yielded nine crucial practices: leadership, vision, diversity, centralization versus decentralization, communication, data, accountability, coordination of recruitment and retention, and commitment capital. This publication contains a discussion of these nine practices and describes how to apply them appropriately and effectively to virtually any contemporary campus in the United States. External review teams add value to the review process, although colleges and universities should work to utilize the talents and dedication of campus leaders to bring about change. In doing so, however, it must be possible for campus leaders who give their input to do so without jeopardizing their own professional futures. The goal of enlightenment must lay not in individual programs but in underlying values, structures and processes that shape the culture of an institution. Understanding these values, structures and processes can contribute to an enhanced environment for underrepresented students, and ultimately, to a more sustaining environment for all members of the learning community. (KW)

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Crucial Practices for Diversity

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A Project Report of the Alliance for Undergraduate Education

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CRUCIAL PRACTICES FOR DIVERSITY

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A Project Report

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July 1994

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THE ALLIANCE FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

The Alliance for Undergraduate Education is a cooperative project of major public research universities aimed at improving the quality of undergraduate education. Because of their size and scope, the participating universities provide academic environments that encourage the development of new ideas and programs. All are providing undergraduate education to large numbers of students in a context that includes graduate and professional education, basic and applied research, and service as an extension of teaching and research.

Officially formed in 1986, the Alliance office is located at The Pennsylvania State University. The work of the Alliance is supported primarily by the dues of member institutions.

Current members of the Alliance are The University of Arizona; the University of California, Berkeley; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Florida; The University of Illinois; Indiana University; the University of Maryland at College Park; The University of Michigan; the University of Minnesota; The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; The Pennsylvania State University; Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; The University of Texas at Austin; and the University of Wisconsin--Madison.

The Alliance has as its primary goals the sharing of information on successful approaches in undergraduate education, the stimulation of new approaches to undergraduate programs, the development and dissemination of exemplary standards and practices for undergraduate education, and collaboration on program development and research projects about undergraduate education in research universities.

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The quality of the insights garnered during the visits owes a great deal to those who served as members of the visiting teams. In addition to the Alliance's executive director, who was a part of every team, the following individuals served on one or more teams: Cordell Black, Dennis Cabral, Celestino Fernandez, Gerardo Gonzalez, E. Royster Harper, Gloria Hawkins, Richard Hollingsworth, Herman Lujan, Norihiko Mihara, Kathryn Mohrman, Richard Nurse, Carlos Rodriguez, and George Wright.

The authors would also like to note the special contributions of the host institutions. Without their willingness to provide the Alliance teams with the greatest possible access to students, faculty, staff, and administrators, it would have been impossible to test our instruments or understand the complex workings of these universities. Their willingness to foster the open discussions sought by the teams confirmed for us their real commitment to improving the prospects of success for their undergraduate students of color.

The sustained interest and support of the Alliance's Board of Governors has been essential to the completion of this project. At various points their searching questions about the project helped all of us to keep our ultimate goal in mind: the greater success of undergraduate students of color at our universities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CRUCIAL PRACTICES FOR DIVERSITY

In September of 1986, a group of large public research universities came together to form the Alliance for Undergraduate Education, a project dedicated to improving the quality of undergraduate education on their campuses. From the Alliance's inception, one of its primary areas of interest has been the recruitment and retention of undergraduate students of color, particularly members of underrepresented groups. Following an initial conference at UCLA in November 1987 to share information on related issues, in 1988 the Alliance formed a Working Group on Underrepresented Minorities that was charged with sharing information and innovative programmatic approaches related to underrepresented groups. One of the working group's earliest projects was an effort to look at model diversity plans, but this quickly expanded to an effort to develop a self-assessment guide that could help an institution understand the interrelationships among its programs and the assumptions underlying its approaches to improving the success rates of undergraduate students of color. As teams made up of representatives of Alliance institutions tested the guide on various member campuses, they became convinced of two things: first, that there was value to be gained for the host institution from involving external teams in the review and, second, that the enlightenment sought lay not in individual programs but in the underlying values, structures, and processes that shape the culture of an individual institution of higher learning. Despite the unique qualities and environments of each campus, certain patterns of challenges and opportunities gradually emerged as common to most.

From those patterns it has been possible to discern the nine crucial practices summarized below. The practices are more complex, more interconnected, more fundamental to the creation of a supportive environment than we had previously imagined. Although these practices are based on first-hand experiences on the campuses of large

public research universities, they are shared in the belief that they address issues that can be found in some form on virtually any contemporary campus. Understanding these practices and applying them appropriately can contribute to an enhanced environment for our most challenged students, and ultimately, to a more sustaining environment for all members of the learning community. We would encourage readers to explore the discussion of these practices as thoroughly as possible from the perspectives of their individual institutions to understand that the points being made reach far beyond programmatic constructs.

#1: LEADERSHIP. Presidential-level leadership is essential but not sufficient. Leadership needs to exist at every level and be coordinated across the institution. To be effective, leadership needs to be attuned to institutional culture. Leadership must be visible and strong; it must be suited to the institutional context; and it must be widely shared, nurtured, and encouraged.

#2: VISION. Institutional vision is an essential element in achieving and sustaining a climate that supports diversity. It should be encompassing, shared throughout the university community, and compellingly articulated by the senior leaders. Institutions should be aware of the power of vision and the nature of their own vision. Every effort should be made to foster an encompassing vision, but it must be understood that a vision cannot be dictated nor superimposed on an institutional context unprepared to sustain it.

#3: DIVERSITY. The term diversity may be conceptualized and interpreted in many different ways, but it is essential that an institution develop a shared understanding of its meaning and appropriate ways to realize that understanding on campus. A shared definition of diversity cannot be taken for granted. For a definition of diversity to serve as a guiding and mobilizing institutional principle, it must be agreed upon by the various constituencies whom it would serve. Ideally, it should inform an institution's future, recognize its past, and reflect a resolution of competing interests and ideologies in the present.

#4: CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION. Whatever the dominant organizing principle of a campus, it is important to compensate for inherent natural tendencies: decentralized campuses

need to make extra efforts to prevent isolation, to share successes, and to publicize innovation. More centralized institutions need to avoid attempting to change the campus culture by decree and instead foster broad acceptance and support at the departmental level. Thus, while both centralized and decentralized universities have particular advantages when it comes to instituting university-wide change, both models have vulnerabilities as well. The most successful leaders are likely to be those whose strategies for change take into account both the advantages and the potential liabilities of their particular institution's structural and organizational orientation.

#5: COMMUNICATION. Efforts are more likely to succeed when there are opportunities for communication across units and groups. In particular, open lines of communication between administrators and faculty on the one hand and students on the other assure that all are informed. It is also helpful to include students on committees charged with setting policies that will affect them. Successful communication, which involves receiving information as well as sending it, is essential in many ways to making universities more nurturing environments. We must recognize the various kinds of barriers that can impede needed communication and work to overcome them.

#6: DATA. In order to fulfill their role as the necessary undergirding for rational policy making and goal setting, data should be trustworthy and trusted, timely, shared appropriately, and useful. The handling of data related to diversity issues on our campuses can be a particularly vivid reflection of our perceptions of these issues. Treating these data and the potential users with respect, ensuring accuracy, and encouraging discussion can contribute much to a climate conducive to change.

#7: ACCOUNTABILITY. There needs to be an unbroken chain of accountability that extends from the president or chancellor to the student. Accountability is an essential tool for bringing about change. It is time for research universities to consider thoughtfully the connection between individual responsibility and the achievement of institutional goals for diversity. By holding them accountable, we demonstrate to individuals the value of what they are asked to do and their individual importance to achieving goals.

#8: COORDINATION OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION. Efforts to recruit and retain people of color, whether administrators, faculty, staff, or students, need to be coordinated and sustained. Success in recruiting and retaining students of color goes hand-in-hand with successful recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and administrators of color. Every aspect of campus and community environments can be critical to recruiting and retaining persons of color as students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Improving recruitment and retention will most likely mean paying concerted attention to an individual's total experience, both on and off campus.

#9: COMMITMENT CAPITAL. It is essential to value faculty and students, staff and administrators who are the effective architects of change, but we must recognize that they are a nonrenewable resource with the limits and frailties of all human beings and use their talents and generosity wisely. Above all, we must recognize that they should be used to launch an institutional initiative, not to shoulder the long-term burden of institutional change. At the very least, universities should add to their ranks consistently and often. Universities should utilize the talents and dedication of these leaders for change on their campuses, but they must make it possible for those who give so generously to the institution to do so without jeopardizing their own professional futures.

CRUCIAL PRACTICES FOR DIVERSITY

Introduction

Initially in 1987 and again in 1989, the Alliance for Undergraduate Education, a consortium of large public research universities, brought together individuals from member institutions with significant personal and professional involvement in improving the access--and subsequent success--of students of color to undergraduate education at Alliance universities. From these initial meetings, which were oriented to sharing information about successful programs and strategies and were held under the aegis of the Alliance's Working Group on Underrepresented Minorities, a sense quickly emerged that we needed to rethink our overall approach to recruiting and retaining students of color with an eye toward underlying structural and attitudinal factors that might be undermining our efforts. As a result, the Alliance developed an instrument that it hoped could be used by institutions for self-study to probe these factors.

Between December 1989 and December 1992, seven member institutions volunteered to participate in site visits. The participating universities, located in diverse regions of the nation, were all large public research universities with majority white enrollments. The composition of the visit teams varied, but generally the teams included the Alliance executive director, a member of the Alliance's Board of Governors, and several members of the Alliance's Working Group on Underrepresented Minorities. In return for the opportunity to conduct extensive interviews with a university's executives and academic administrators, as well as students, faculty, and staff, visit teams provided confidential reports to the institution on their findings about institutional climate and practices. A copy of the interview instruments in their final form may be found in the Appendix.

Based on the experiences of the site visit teams and several evaluation sessions conducted with those who have been most involved with the project over the longest period of time, we would like to offer tentative conclusions about a number of practices related to diversity on the campuses of large public research universities: Though it is not possible to offer a one-size-fits-all solution to every problem relating to diversity and to the recruitment and retention of students and faculty of color on campus, it *is* possible to identify practices our visits indicate can make a real difference, as well as some that, while well intended, can often prove counterproductive. The summary document presented here represents a final report on the visits and is based on

an analysis of the patterns that emerged from the visits, individually and as a group. Those preparing this final report had access to all the materials collected and developed during the visits. The qualitative nature of the data collected and the fact that the interview questions were modified somewhat form the first visit to the last precluded any statistical analysis of data gathered.

When the site visit teams began their investigations, they expected their interviews to document the value of a well-defined plan with specific goals and a highly visible president-champion to lead the quest for diversity; in other words, they anticipated finding a model that could be depended upon to produce the desired results. Although elements of these expectations did appear, no ideal model surfaced. What the teams found instead were richly varied institutional landscapes with different histories vis-à-vis diversity, different approaches to institutional change, and a range of leadership styles. Within these varied landscapes, however, certain fundamental factors or practices emerged as very important considerations in any diversity initiative, so much so that we have characterized them as *crucial practices*.

Understanding Crucial Practices

The practices discussed here have been labeled "crucial" because they have a *fundamental* bearing on an institution's ability to foster diversity, no matter what the particular initiative or issue might be. They comprise foundational elements--linchpins, if you will--that help an institution shape and support a diversity agenda. The teams came to recognize and appreciate the key role these practices play by noting *what happened when they were not present to support institutional policies and goals and, concomitantly, how beneficial it was to have them in place, providing such support.*

Therefore, an important first point about crucial practices is recognizing that they are *the* key determinants in shaping outcomes in diversity-related matters. By their very nature, they set the climate, the framework, for facilitating change. Where they are present, improvements in diversity are facilitated; where they are absent, progress is deterred. A second, perhaps somewhat surprising, point about crucial practices is that they often involve some of the most obvious aspects of institutional life, thus making it easy for their importance to be overlooked and misunderstood. For example, the discussions below about the importance of variables such as leadership, vision, and data usage could be dismissed as simply underscoring the obvious. How could an institution function well without adequate leadership, vision, and data usage? These are, after all, essential aspects of institutional behavior.

However, our visits indicated that certain features of even the most obvious institutional qualities need to be carefully examined when dealing with diversity-related issues. In this regard, we saw evidence that institutions often find it difficult to assess rigorously the value of what they are doing, the efficacy of a particular approach, when diversity is at issue. They tend instead to assume that they are doing the "right" things because what they are doing does, in fact, appear to be so right. For example, programs specifically designed for students of color may be organizationally and budgetarily untouchable, yet lack support as an integral part of the *academic* enterprise. Funding becomes *the* overriding factor, so much so that it masks the need to address other, equally important considerations--such as program evaluation, alternative approaches to services, and the need for better-coordinated relationships with other initiatives. Furthermore, on many of our campuses it is still assumed, in direct contradiction to accumulating evidence of the multiple factors involved, that developmental programs are both necessary *and sufficient* to minority student success. Too often, faculty and administrators have come to accept minimal improvement in the retention of people of color at every level of the university as the best that can be hoped for.

Many thoroughly committed, thoughtful, and creative individuals on these campuses understand the importance of being more self aware and are willing, even eager, to meet that challenge. Often in subtle ways they are changing their part of the institutional landscape. We also saw evidence that an institution that might have difficulty with one "crucial practice" might do quite well with others. What is needed is to be able to discern the successful people and approaches and then to be willing to follow their lead--a charge that often seems far easier to articulate than to accomplish. However, the effort is an important step on the way to better institutional self-awareness.

What follows are suggested practices that should help, both individually and in concert with one another, to improve the frequency and scope of an institution's successes. We have also included examples, in some cases, of behaviors we observed to be undermining the potential value of the practice; we have included such examples in the hope that they may assist an institution that is reviewing a particular practice to see if it is providing the quality of support that it potentially can.

Although all of these practices are in many ways intertwined, four seemed to stand out as first requirements for success: leadership, vision, the definition of diversity, and centralization versus decentralization. Although we begin our discussion by focusing on these four, we believe that all, ultimately, are vital to the achievement of institutional goals.

Crucial Practice #1: LEADERSHIP. Presidential-level leadership is essential but not sufficient. Leadership needs to exist at every level and be coordinated across the institution. To be effective, leadership needs to be attuned to institutional culture.

This project began with several underlying assumptions about leadership embedded in the instrument and the approach. It was assumed, for instance, that an institution needed a written plan to provide a visible commitment to a set of measurable goals. It was also assumed that there had to be outspoken, aggressive leadership at the top, and it was strongly suspected that these might well be the most important factors in determining whether an institution actually provided an environment that encouraged student success.

Some, but not all, of what was hypothesized was borne out by our visit interviews. First, in some cases a written plan was indeed helpful, representing a public commitment to change and a degree of responsibility on the part of the leader(s) for bringing that change about. In other cases, particularly in contexts where formal planning was not well accepted, little would have been served by a written plan. Moreover, even in situations where a written plan seemed appropriate to the institutional culture, it was noted that such a plan could also lead to inflexibility, an inappropriate focus on numbers, and a sense of institutional failure if the specified goals were not met. The most effective leaders appeared to be those who understood the nature of their institutions and their institutional value systems well enough to cast a diversity plan appropriately.

As for having outspoken, aggressive leadership at the top, there was a great deal of evidence supporting the value of this, but perhaps most noteworthy was the fact that this type of leadership could be manifested in varied and complex ways. Highly visible leadership did not have to be focused in a single individual, nor did the president or chancellor need to be the leader to embody this leadership style. There were effective combinations of presidents and provosts that worked very well. As long as the commitment at the top was effectively expressed, the exact configuration was not of prime importance.

But the visits also revealed that to be optimally effective, leadership must exist at every level and must be coordinated in support of institutional goals. In cases where the plans seemed appropriate and the top leadership was fully committed, yet the institution was not experiencing the anticipated success, close observation often revealed that the leadership did not extend in

a concerted way beyond the main administration building to the colleges, schools, and departments. All too often strong central administrative leadership seemed to be supported primarily by isolated minority program directors and deans, department heads, and faculty of good will unevenly distributed across the university: a coherent and effective leadership structure was not yet in place. This suggests that there is a need to view leadership comprehensively, as befits the multi-centered institutions that public research universities often are.

Public research institutions are richly endowed with potential leaders throughout their structures. But the teams noted that institutions can sometimes overlook the importance of soliciting, facilitating, and effectively coordinating that leadership. One reason for this might be that sponsored research on our campuses inevitably creates power centers in those areas that are especially successful at obtaining outside funding. These power centers may in some instances be uninterested in supporting or reluctant to embrace institutional diversity initiatives; even presidents may find themselves relatively powerless to bring units of independent means on board. In these situations, it might be necessary for others with a stake in successful institutional change to assist in fostering the leadership that is necessary at all levels.

A noteworthy consideration is the reality that few academic leaders are experienced in providing leadership in areas of diversity. This is not to fault that leadership, but merely to note that progression through the faculty ranks into the ranks of academic administrators has not in the past been the best training ground for developing diversity leadership. What today's academic leaders bring to their leadership roles is the extremely useful understanding of how to accomplish change in an academic environment, but the site visits indicate that this understanding needs to be augmented with leadership education in the meaning and imperative of diversity initiatives in the public research university environment. A willingness to work together in mutual support is important at every level: of regents or trustees for presidents and provosts, of presidents and provosts for deans and division heads, of deans and division heads for department chairs and program directors, of department chairs and program directors for faculty and staff, of all of the above for students.

LEADERSHIP MUST BE VISIBLE AND STRONG, IT MUST BE SUITED TO THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT, AND IT MUST BE WIDELY SHARED, NURTURED, AND ENCOURAGED.

Crucial Practice #2: VISION. Institutional vision is an essential element in achieving and sustaining a climate that supports diversity. It should be encompassing, shared throughout the university community, and compellingly articulated by the senior leaders.

One of the more interesting aspects of our investigations had to do with the issue of the institution's vision of itself and its role in relation to issues of diversity. While we did not initially anticipate how powerful and extensive the impact of institutional--and personal--vision could be on a campus, its importance quickly emerged during the process of the interviews. We hesitate to suggest that vision may be considered a practice, yet we suspect that understanding vision and its power to transform is something that an institution can become more adept at over time. Vision empowers, but it can also constrain. Limited visions do not call forth grand leadership strategies. Perhaps even more important, grand visions that, for whatever reason, are not shared broadly can do little to bolster change.

The institutional visions found by the teams were defining ones for those who articulated them; they suggested the extent to which an institution was ready to take a stand for the values of multiculturalism and the quality of education for students of color. At what was, from our point of view, the desirable end of the spectrum were those institutions that saw themselves as providing leadership for diversity for the nation. Here, the vision was not limited to leadership in higher education or in education generally, but encompassed leadership for any public institution. Universities with self-concepts akin to this seemed less willing to marginalize the interests of people of color within the university community and more cognizant of the contributions of diversity to the making of a great university and country. Those institutions that were not at that end of the continuum were more likely to think in terms of achieving representation of diverse groups similar to that within their state populations. Although it can be argued that this approach is a proper first step, institutions with these more limited visions seemed to pursue their diversity agendas less vigorously, seemed more willing to accept the relegation of concerns of faculty and students of color to the periphery of institutional concerns, and seemed to be more embroiled in interoffice, intergroup, and other jurisdictional types of problems.

As will also be seen in the section discussing the concept of diversity, quality of vision is a difficult-to-define aspect that appears to play an important role in fostering positive campus climate. Quality of vision can seem far removed from day-to-day recruiting activities or classroom discussions. However, elusive as fostering an encompassing vision may seem to be, it is a

factor that helps to rationalize all of the programs and behaviors on our campuses. Because of the very positive influence a significant vision can have, we believe that it is worth the institutional effort to build such a vision and to assure that it is a shared vision, one for which people feel ownership. Many discussions--in faculty senates, special diversity forums, departmental and college committees, and trustee retreats--may be necessary before an institution can truly come forward with a shared vision. As with leadership, a declaration from the top is important but not sufficient. Despite the effort required to build it, our visits suggest that without a clear and shared vision, many of the specific initiatives aimed at diversifying the curriculum and recruiting and retaining students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color will be less successful than they could otherwise be.

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE POWER OF VISION AND THE NATURE OF THEIR OWN VISION. EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO FOSTER AN ENCOMPASSING VISION, BUT IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD THAT VISION CANNOT BE DICTATED NOR SUPERIMPOSED ON AN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT THAT WILL NOT SUSTAIN IT.

Crucial Practice #3: DIVERSITY. The term diversity may be conceptualized and interpreted in many different ways, but it is essential that an institution develop a shared understanding of its meaning and appropriate ways to realize that understanding on campus.

Simply stating this term is to call forth a congeries of definitions, agendas, interests, and attitudes. Even when an institution has a *diversity plan*, there may be little common understanding of an institutional *diversity agenda*. What does the term diversity mean on a particular campus? How is the concept to be implemented? Who is responsible for implementing a diversity agenda? Why do we need one? Does a diversity agenda mean special courses or a week of programming in the spring or the fall? Does the diversity agenda relate specifically to one group or culture, or does it encompass a broader meaning? Should we call it something else? What should a diversity agenda accomplish for us? What does it mean to the students?

The combined experience of visit teams suggests that it would be extremely difficult to step on most of our campuses and find consensus regarding the term or the concept. What is more, leaders often believe they have articulated a clear and motivating definition of diversity, when, in fact, acceptance of that definition does not extend as far as the front door of the administration building. This is not to say that leaders cannot be persuasive that diversity is important, but if individuals do not hold a common definition,

then institutions experience considerable difficulty as large constituencies with different definitions of diversity pursue different diversity agendas and have different measures of achievement. At the least, the definitions and agendas need to be compatible. When they are incompatible, they are ultimately divisive and destructive.

The significance of this need for clarity and consensus may seem overstated, but the teams' experiences indicate that without a base level of clear and shared understanding throughout an institution, use of the term "diversity" can be more problematic than helpful in advancing institutional initiatives. The negative consequences of definitional disagreements appeared frequently throughout the visits. In many cases the incongruity provided a convenient ideological "club" for those seeking to advance a particular political, philosophical, or operational agenda. For example, there were several instances where individuals desirous of securing, preserving, or expanding funding or service levels for their group angrily insisted, rightly or wrongly, that their needs were not being properly addressed because the institution, in formulating its diversity initiatives, was not treating the group's interests on a par with others. In one case, the objection centered around the argument that the "first-oppressed" should also be first in line and others should wait to be hired and promoted, admitted and retained. In another case, an institution directed its recruiters to improve their recruitment of students of color, a directive that conveyed to minority faculty and staff a strong and very welcome institutional commitment to diversity. However, the institution then limited the recruiters to specific in-state areas, a restriction that automatically, if advertently, advantaged one ethnic group over others. This not only made it difficult, if not virtually impossible, for the recruiters to achieve the levels of ethnic balance across groups that they would have liked, it also seriously undermined both public and internal perceptions about the institution's understanding of and commitment to "diversity."

In another instance, a nationally recognized minority scholar expressed extreme frustration over the use of the term "diversity" to justify a series of what she considered to be frustrating administrative and programmatic decisions that, no matter how well intentioned, had done more to hamper than help both professional and institutional growth on her campus. "If I hear the term diversity one more time, I'll scream! It is killing us!" Her exasperation stemmed from years of arguing vainly against misguided actions that had been made palatable to the larger, more powerful academic community by being encased in the conscience-soothing mantle of "diversity." This scholar saw her experience as being emblematic of the not uncommon tendency to opt for expediency where diversity-related matters are the issue. Unfortunately, the teams saw evidence that this indeed is often the case. Rather than engage in

fuller, more in-depth treatments of the concept of diversity, the term is more typically subjected to quick or convenient applications that often do more harm than good.

For example, in situations where the need for mainstream curricular transformation is apparent and possible, a department, college, or school might balk at some of the challenges associated with that and opt instead for the more conventionally accepted approach of offering a few very specific courses in multiculturalism; thereby seeming to satisfying diversity-related considerations, while in actuality sidestepping some of the more complex, enduring issues that should be addressed. In other situations, minority student groups introducing new, "diverse" perspectives to the campus, say through music, art, or dance, might find themselves in the perplexing situation of being denied funding for a program by an oversight committee that stipulates the proposed activity is too narrowly focused and not broadly enough appealing to the general student body. The minority group is left wondering what, then, is signified by the term "diversity" in this context.

A campus that has achieved this particular crucial practice, often through the very kinds of discussions necessary to build an institutional vision, exhibits a common, stronger understanding of what is to be achieved. The term and concept is not then the definition of the president alone, nor of a single group. The university community has had the opportunity to discuss the concept, perhaps through a diversity forum or a series of focus groups, and has had the opportunity to develop a common vision. This is not to say that a vision once formed is inviolate. It is extremely valuable--even necessary--to revisit the issue periodically, for the campus climates change continually and often rapidly, and this concept can be at the center of successful adaptation.

Our investigations suggest that one of the most common disagreements in the area of diversity can occur over what groups are to be included in diversity initiatives. For example, is diversity being used as simply another term for desegregation? On some campuses, among some constituencies, it is. Often the assumption that diversity extends only to African Americans may be unspoken but pervasive among some groups: African Americans may assume they have the preeminent need because they believe that desegregation has not been fully achieved; any one group may believe other-group preferences are depriving them of deserved attention. In that case, the group that feels underserved has not accepted the definition willingly but actually sees itself as being coerced into acceptance. An institution in this situation may be unaware that this feeling of competition exists, or it may be aware of it and lack consensus about what to do. Whatever the cause, its inactivity is likely to exacerbate the conflict when it finally erupts; the need to resolve the

meaning of diversity on campus is not going to go away. What marks the ethnic and other groups caught in these situations is a great deal of pain, anger, frustration, and self-doubt. Only when the institution finally acknowledges the differences and the legitimacy of the different interpretations can it begin to define common goals and develop the practices that will move the institution toward realization of those goals.

Team experiences suggest that there are many reasons to be optimistic that this issue, once recognized, can be resolved. Where this type of conflict is present but unrecognized for what it is, the greatest cause for concern centers on the personal cost it exacts from individual students of color who are struggling to achieve in that type of environment. Also of concern is the long-term cost to the institution that is unaware of the depth of the disagreement over the concept of diversity until bitter divisions have been created that may be long in healing. This lack of institutional awareness often stems from difficulties associated with the critical issues of centralization and decentralization, communication, "commitment capital," and accountability, which are discussed below.

A SHARED DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY CANNOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED. FOR A DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY TO SERVE AS A GUIDING AND MOBILIZING INSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE, IT MUST BE AGREED UPON BY THE VARIOUS CONSTITUENCIES WHOM IT WOULD SERVE. IDEALLY, IT SHOULD INFORM AN INSTITUTION'S FUTURE, RECOGNIZE ITS PAST, AND REFLECT A RESOLUTION OF COMPETING INTERESTS AND IDEOLOGIES IN THE PRESENT.

Crucial Practice #4: CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION. Whatever the dominant organizing principle of a campus, it is important to compensate for inherent natural tendencies: decentralized campuses need to make extra efforts to prevent isolation, to share successes, and publicize innovation. More centralized institutions need to avoid attempting to change the campus culture by decree and instead foster broad acceptance and support at the departmental level.

A point that was reinforced during the site visits is that, if there is a dominant model among large public research institutions, it is probably that of decentralization. The teams often heard the decentralization of a campus spoken of with great pride, and we understand the origins of that pride. Traditionally, decentralization means that the faculty are in control, that there is a great deal of individual determination on the parts of departments and faculty. This, many will assert, is characteristic of a great university. Supporters of decentralization will also argue that it fosters a sense of ownership

for programs and initiatives regarding faculty and students of color, as well as great creativity in finding solutions to problems.

Members of more centralized universities, on the other hand, point to their ability to implement, university-wide, new initiatives for students of color; to utilize resources effectively; and to make certain that policies on hiring or data sharing are universally applied.

The visit experiences suggest that both of these models have many advantages, but that seldom were either decentralized or centralized universities doing enough to understand how their structural organization might be affecting diversity efforts. Decentralized institutions, for example, have a particularly heavy responsibility to foster effective communication; without it, good ideas that could serve the whole institution often wither in isolation for lack of champions and funds. The successes of one unit in hiring faculty of color and innovating programs that foster student achievement remain the successes of one unit, not something to be celebrated--and duplicated--across the campus community. Too often in decentralized settings there is the sense that nothing is really happening, that whatever is said at the top, the rest of the institution is conducting business as usual.

More centralized institutions, on the other hand, while seemingly much more efficient at instituting change, may find that when the senior leadership changes, there is little ownership for many of the programs so auspiciously begun. With relatively little say in what happens or control over how diversity is accomplished, many individuals in dispersed colleges, departments, or programs may feel that the central administration's vision for change has nothing to do with them, that it is someone else's agenda for which they have little or no responsibility.

These models pose a challenge to presidential leadership in particular. Although there may be no ideal model, on several campuses we found leadership that seemed almost perfectly modulated to fit these characteristics. One was a highly centralized campus where the president consistently delegated leadership and seemed particularly patient about waiting for consensus to evolve. The second case was that of a highly decentralized campus in which the president chose to lead by example, by offering a personal commitment to building diversity without attempting to dictate its acceptance by all. Our perception is that both approaches can be remarkably effective in their particular milieus, the major risk factor being a lack of sufficient time to accomplish their goals. A precipitating event or a change in the top administrator for whatever reason can mean failure to institutionalize the desired change. We believe, however, that concerted attention to Crucial Practices

1, 2, 3, and 4 can assist presidents in accomplishing their goals, whatever the setting.

WHILE BOTH CENTRALIZED AND DECENTRALIZED UNIVERSITIES HAVE PARTICULAR ADVANTAGES WHEN IT COMES TO INSTITUTING UNIVERSITY-WIDE CHANGE, BOTH MODELS HAVE VULNERABILITIES AS WELL. THE MOST SUCCESSFUL LEADERS ARE LIKELY TO BE THOSE WHOSE STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE TAKE INTO ACCOUNT BOTH THE ADVANTAGES AND THE POTENTIAL LIABILITIES OF THEIR PARTICULAR INSTITUTION'S STRUCTURAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ORIENTATION.

Crucial Practice #5: COMMUNICATION. Efforts are more likely to succeed when there are opportunities for communication across units and groups. In particular, open lines of communication between administrators and faculty on the one hand and students on the other assure that all are informed. It is also helpful to include students on committees charged with setting policies that will affect them.

The site visits reaffirmed the fact that communication--the sharing of useful information and ideas--can pose special challenges on university campuses. Different constituencies frequently have few occasions to speak with each other. All too often, administrators are isolated from both faculty and students by their schedules and off-campus responsibilities. At times it can seem that faculty and students, staff and administrators do not speak the same language when the opportunity for exchange finally appears. If there were an existing sense of common purpose on our campuses, this might not be such a grave need. But in an atmosphere of uncertainty and apparently conflicting goals, failure to communicate one's intentions or the meaning of one's actions can result in a loss of leadership and setbacks to every institutional goal.

The teams found that a campus that succeeds with this crucial practice is notable for including students on committees and other policy or decision-making groups. Efforts are made to build communication networks across units, both through formal and informal networking possibilities, often as simple as sponsoring brown-bag lunches once a month for minority program coordinators, or seeing to it that key individuals are positioned to serve as information conduits. Innovative programs developed in one school or college are publicized across campus.

Perhaps most of all there is a need to listen to students. Invariably, the teams found the students they met to be remarkably astute about their

own experiences and those of their friends and companion class members. We tend to assume that undergraduate students have hardly any institutional loyalty, that they care little about what happens to an institution they will soon leave. We found that the students with whom we spoke think in terms of an institution's relationship with their families and communities; hence, they care a great deal about the kinds of experiences younger relatives might encounter and are willing to invest of themselves to leave the university a more sustaining place. In this regard, upper division students who have successfully negotiated the system can prove especially insightful about what is valuable and perhaps missing in the orientation process, or the efficacy of residence hall practices that assign students on the basis of ethnicity. The students themselves are a greatly undervalued and underutilized resource. As part of their efforts to improve communication, institutions should make every effort to have ongoing, serious dialogues with students about their experiences, their ideas, and their concerns. Too often, students are brought into a discussion after the fact more as a formality than as a genuine part of the discussion.

The site-visit teams found that communication can also be a vital underpinning of efforts to coordinate services. On many of our campuses, responsibilities for providing support services to students are scattered across multiple units. For example, there may be both centralized and college- or school-based learning centers for advising assistance. In such cases, communication across units is vital to providing the best possible level of service for the student, with the greatest possible cost efficiency for the institution. This may seem to be very obvious. Nevertheless, it is often the case that there is more competition than cooperation among service units, a situation that can be more harmful than helpful to student and institutional interests.

The teams also found that the role of power in communication patterns must be recognized. Sharing a successful idea can mean losing control over it--and credit for it--to others with more leverage within the institution. Not including an individual on the list of those to be copied with information can be part of the political games playing that operates to some degree on most campuses. Thus, it is not always simply that the mechanisms to communicate are not in place; at times and for a variety of reasons, the desire to communicate may be missing as well, or communication may be deliberately manipulated to disadvantage someone.

SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION, WHICH INVOLVES RECEIVING INFORMATION AS WELL AS SENDING IT, IS ESSENTIAL IN MANY WAYS TO MAKING UNIVERSITIES MORE NURTURING ENVIRONMENTS. WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE VARIOUS KINDS OF BARRIERS THAT CAN IMPEDE NEEDED COMMUNICATION AND WORK TO OVERCOME THEM.

Crucial Practice #6: DATA. In order to fulfill their role as the necessary undergirding for rational policy making and goal setting, data should be trustworthy and trusted, timely, shared appropriately, and useful.

The collection and management of data can in many ways be indicative of how business is conducted on a campus. The visiting teams did not anticipate the varied problems research universities would manifest regarding data on student recruitment and retention. Clearly, there was an underlying assumption that in a research-oriented institutional climate, individuals at every level would be comfortable with data, would use it wisely and with respect, and would understand its significance as a basis for action. The teams found that this orientation toward data proved to be more difficult to accomplish and rarer than anticipated.

Although some of the examples that follow might suggest that we have set our goals for the handling of data unreachably high, in fact we found a model worth emulating. On one campus we noticed that whether we were interviewing central administrators or departmental program directors, they had one thing in common: all knew critical data about their student body, its demographics, even the numbers of minority high school graduates in the surrounding community. Thus, all had the benefit of access to data that were critical to programmatic decision making at several levels. This campus benefited in this way because a wise senior administrator with broad responsibilities for recruiting and retaining minorities understood the value of shared data and a common understanding of existing demographics and made certain that those who could benefit from this knowledge received this information. With a shared knowledge base, the data became less threatening and eminently useful. As administrators could share reactions to the data, it also became easier to develop strategies for addressing the problems highlighted by the data or for refining data collection methodologies and dissemination. To the interview team, it seemed that data was functioning as it ideally should in a research university environment.

Those responsible for developing and maintaining an institutional data base need to understand the goals that it should serve. When an institution is effectively employing this crucial practice, it is diligent in assuring that the data are accurate and available to those who can make the most direct difference in students' lives. There is no hierarchy of data users; rather, individuals are supplied on the basis of need. Everyone, from senior policy makers to program directors, shares a common understanding of the starting point. Data are

discussed openly even when they are disappointing. Data bases are kept current, e.g., the names of and associated information about administrators, faculty, staff, and students no longer identified with the institution are deleted from the data base in a timely manner. Data are made available, not just in institution- or college-wide formats, but disaggregated by unit when that would be useful. *Perhaps most important, time and energy are focused on finding ways to address the issues documented by the data.*

There are a number of ways of straying from the crucial practice described above. We doubt that the data problems we have seen on various campuses were intentional, nor should it be assumed that a single attitude toward data is operative on a particular campus; the point is simply that each attitude described below exists in areas where it can determine what and how data will be used to shape policy and practice with regard to undergraduate students of color. The following are examples of less-than-constructive data practices found on some of the campuses we visited:

In one case data were considered power. Political agendas, often personal as well as institutional, were pursued by neglecting to share necessary data with those lower in the institutional hierarchy who needed them to act responsibly in the interests of students of color. As a result, those denied access were forced to make decisions without the benefit of the necessary data to back them; in one instance, college-level administrators bartered services and called in special favors to obtain information they needed when they were denied the budget necessary to "buy" the data. Whether it intended to or not, the institution that allowed data to be withheld in this way communicated a lack of respect for those working directly to improve conditions for students of color.

Visiting teams found a number of cases in which data were handled casually, with seemingly little understanding that underrepresented groups took the data very seriously. In the worst cases, it appeared that inaccurate data were obscuring the actual numbers of people of color through inadvertent or careless overcounting. This involved including, for example, of newly hired faculty who at the last minute withdrew from the position or neglecting to remove individuals as soon as they relocated to another institution. In a few cases, whole ethnic categories were omitted from the data base if the institution was not *required* to count them.

What we have termed "data indifference" can be present at an institution that is actually doing a creditable job of collecting and sharing relevant data. For whatever reason, the data seem to lack the power to move the institution to action. When queried, the institutions involved usually responded

that they were really no worse than their peers, and found a variety of reasons not to be particularly disturbed by what the data showed. We suspect that their apparent indifference is actually rooted in a sense of powerlessness over controlling admissions standards or having sufficient budget to provide the support needed by their student clientele, but whatever the reason, institutions where such attitudes prevail appear to find it difficult to relate data to policy in an effective way.

In other cases, data were simply being undervalued by those who needed them more than they knew. On several campuses visiting teams found that administrators who should have known the basic ethnic composition of the entering classes, or of the undergraduate student body, or of their surrounding community, simply did not know. Sometimes the discrepancies were not very great, but sometimes whole ethnic groups were being overlooked. Such lack of knowledge concerning data can make it very difficult to build concepts of diversity, to anticipate future conditions and demands, or to build a sense of common purpose within the administration. Such lack of understanding is likely to be a temporary condition. But by the time the overlooked group asserts itself in ways not tied to the data base, the challenges the group poses for the institution may be much more difficult to address.

Large public research universities sometimes find that data about underrepresented groups can cause considerable uneasiness. Administrators of such institutions, often fighting to maintain institutional independence from oversight bodies, are not eager to be compared and found wanting. Long secure in their research missions, these institutions may view with dismay the change represented by the altering composition of the university community and the expectations that come with it. Often, data collection is considered a burdensome by-product of increasing federal and state regulatory requirements. Unfortunately, this perception of data can distract university administrators from the fundamental truth that data, correctly collected and interpreted, can be beneficial to the institution itself.

One of the more salient impressions of the site visits is the need for institutions to look critically at their attitudes toward and their handling of data. Those staffing offices responsible for federal and state reporting are not usually, on their own, the appropriate individuals to decide what the institution's data needs are. Such decisions are appropriately the shared responsibility of data users, senior administrators, and institutional data specialists. A visiting team was once told by the director of an institutional research office that program directors and others could not be "trusted" with the data, that they did not understand the value of the data and thus could not be given access. The team's recommendation was that, if there are people in place who

lack that understanding, then it is the institution's responsibility to see that those individuals learn whatever is necessary to be able to utilize the data effectively.

Changing an institution's relationship with its data base will not be easy and probably will not happen overnight, but our observations suggest that it is well worth the effort. There is reason to believe that data appropriately gathered and used are absolutely critical to the success of recruitment and retention efforts on university campuses; the continuation of any of the data handling techniques described above can seriously undermine all other initiatives.

THE HANDLING OF DATA RELATED TO DIVERSITY ISSUES ON OUR CAMPUSES CAN BE A PARTICULARLY VIVID REFLECTION OF OUR PERCEPTIONS OF THESE ISSUES. TREATING THESE DATA AND THE POTENTIAL USERS WITH RESPECT, ENSURING ACCURACY, AND ENCOURAGING DISCUSSION CAN CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO A CLIMATE CONDUCIVE TO CHANGE.

Crucial Practice #7: ACCOUNTABILITY. There needs to be an unbroken chain of accountability that extends from the president or chancellor to the student.

The teams were left with the impression that this concept is extremely important to achievement of any diversity goals. In general, it seems fair to say that our very top leaders--our presidents and our chancellors and often our provosts--hold themselves accountable for the diversity agenda, and those who spoke with visiting teams generally recognized that others would hold them accountable as well. The problem seems to lie in extending accountability beyond the executive suite.

Nearly every campus visited seemed to have a variant on a broken chain of accountability. On some, accountability did not extend to the dean level; on others, accountability extended to the deans but not to the department heads. In still others, there were forms of accountability at the very top and then randomly in some units. In some cases, senior administrators were being held accountable, and students held themselves accountable, but no one was holding deans, department heads, or faculty accountable.

It may be helpful to describe what is meant by accountability at each level. The most familiar model is that of the president or chancellor whose job depends, at least to some extent, on how well institutional goals for hiring

minority faculty and increasing minority student enrollment are met. In the crucial-practice model, each successive layer of administration is held responsible for instituting policies and supporting--even requiring--practices that will further institutional diversity goals. In the best cases, rewards of some kind, perhaps a new faculty line or an opportunity to try a pilot program, are given to units that follow good practice. Few campuses have extended accountability to students, i.e., holding students responsible for availing themselves of the resources provided by the institution to help them succeed, but the model exists.

Though many institutions hesitate to institute systemwide accountability and an accompanying system of rewards and, perhaps, sanctions, the visiting teams found many individuals--deans, department heads, faculty, and students--who indicated a real yearning to be held accountable for their actions. It was not unusual for individuals to volunteer that they had taken some action to promote institutional goals and then suggest that no one really cared whether they acted responsibly or not, for *they were never held accountable for their actions.* On one campus African American students argued eloquently for the need to hold students of color to high standards of academic performance. There was an underlying theme that not to be held accountable was, in the cruelest sense of the word, to be diminished.

By and large, most institutions visited had imperfect--or no--systems of accountability in place. If deans were told to oversee search processes and see that they were effective in bringing about the hires of faculty and administrators of color, they were seldom rewarded for doing so, nor were they in any way sanctioned if they did not. The same was true across the institution. If minority program directors were entrusted with the responsibility for enhancing student success in some specified way, continued funding or even expansion of the office was not necessarily tied to demonstrated success.

Nearly every campus had individuals who recognized the dimensions of the problem and who were personally eager to be accountable, to answer for their actions. What often seemed to be missing was the institutional will to implement a system of true accountability across the institution, with no excuses and no exceptions. Teams were often told that it was not possible to institute such accountability in our universities, that it was legitimate to hold a department accountable for the research funds it brings in, but not for its hiring policies or its mentoring programs or the kind of environment it provides for its students. This question of accountability seemed to be particularly pronounced and especially difficult to address on the more decentralized of our campuses.

Though there were relatively few examples of systematic, institution-wide systems of accountability, there were some indications that this situation may be changing, that institutions are beginning to recognize that without a form of accountability, little lasting progress will be made. Delaying the implementation of a system of accountability all too often also means delaying the change of other crucial practices and the accomplishment of institutional goals for diversity.

ACCOUNTABILITY IS AN ESSENTIAL TOOL FOR BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE. IT IS TIME FOR RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES TO CONSIDER THOUGHTFULLY THE CONNECTION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL GOALS FOR DIVERSITY. BY HOLDING THEM ACCOUNTABLE, WE DEMONSTRATE TO INDIVIDUALS THE VALUE OF WHAT THEY ARE ASKED TO DO AND THEIR INDIVIDUAL IMPORTANCE TO ACHIEVING GOALS.

Crucial Practice #8: COORDINATION OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION. Efforts to recruit and retain people of color, whether administrators, faculty, staff, or students, need to be coordinated and sustained. Success in recruiting and retaining students of color goes hand-in-hand with successful recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and administrators of color.

What we have here would seem to be the chicken and egg of diversity in higher education. All seemed to understand the importance of a welcoming environment both to recruiting and retaining people of color. Unfortunately, most of our institutions have long focused on recruitment and neglected the relatively more difficult task of building a sustaining environment that will provide long-term encouragement to students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color. As a result, most of the institutions visited had experienced difficulty developing sufficient presence to provide the necessary welcoming environment.

Successful models are relatively easy to define: Outsiders no longer remark at the hiring of a person of color for any position; students can find comfortable settings throughout the university and can find faculty mentors in departments other their own ethnic studies departments. One does not hear the comment that a person of color was wanted, but no qualified individual could be found.

The reality is, however, that there are still institutions that have failed to hire women--much less persons of color--as administrators and faculty, yet

who are heard to bemoan the fact that the truly qualified somehow do not apply. These same institutions will also maintain the inviolability of their search processes while at the same time averring their commitment to affirmative action principles. When the search process is examined more closely, it is found that the process proceeds essentially unattended; final lists with no women or persons of color are submitted, and those involved maintain that the process cannot then be interfered with without violating the standards of the institution. Yet, early monitoring and guidance could have had important impacts on the short list that was ultimately submitted.

Some institutions were more concerned than others about the impact of the surrounding community on retaining people of color, but few were investing the effort needed to change those surrounding environments or to offset the negative impact they might have. Indeed, few seemed to be fully aware of what a newly recruited person of color might be facing, or how an individual's personal history might shape his or her perception of that environment. Most simply took the surroundings for granted and assumed that the newcomer would cope. There were exceptions, but usually institutional concern for the living environment did not extend beyond the boundaries of the campus itself.

To be effective, this crucial practice must be comprehensive in approach. No detail of the campus or community environment is too insignificant to be considered. Detail by detail, the environment can be turned into a truly welcoming and sustaining one.

EVERY ASPECT OF CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS CAN BE CRITICAL TO RECRUITING AND RETAINING PERSONS OF COLOR AS STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATORS. IMPROVING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION WILL MOST LIKELY MEAN PAYING CONCERTED ATTENTION TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S TOTAL EXPERIENCE, BOTH ON AND OFF CAMPUS.

Crucial Practice #9: COMMITMENT CAPITAL. It is essential to value faculty and students, staff and administrators who are the effective architects of change, but recognize that they are a nonrenewable resource with the limits and frailties of all human beings and use their talents and generosity wisely. Above all, recognize that they should be used to launch an institutional initiative, not to shoulder the long-term burden of institutional change. At the very least, universities should add to their ranks consistently and often.

The concept of an individual's "commitment capital" was articulated as the capital or reservoir of individual commitment that students, faculty, administrators, and staff of color and others bring to accomplishing change within our institutions not only through their talent, skill, and experience, but also through their sheer will, dedication, and tireless effort. The site teams found that our institutions undoubtedly value individuals with these characteristics and quickly tend to become dependent upon them as resources in multiple ways. They are appointed to key committees and asked to lead initiatives that promise to turn the institution into a much more welcoming and sustaining place. These individuals willingly do what is asked, because they believe in the institution and in what they are doing. But often what they do is treated as if it is never quite enough. The committee whose report was never acted upon is supplanted by yet another committee that the person of color whose commitment capital is fast diminishing is again asked to chair. Unfortunately, the number of such individuals on a given campus seems to remain constant, meaning that the number who can share the opportunity--and the burden--never increases. The demand for time and energy becomes relentless and escalating and, ultimately, wearisome and counterproductive.

What happens is an all-too-familiar story on many if not all of our campuses. These talented, dedicated individuals eventually burn out. Often, they leave; when they stay, they withdraw. The situation can be particularly hard on junior faculty of color, who generally need to spend their time establishing their scholarly credentials but are being asked to commit inordinate amounts of time to improving their institutions without much recognition or compensation. The institution gladly takes what they will give, but too often fails to supply the necessary resources of all kinds to compensate them for this gift of time and energy. Similarly, a handful of students may be repeatedly called upon to serve on committees or represent their constituencies in campus forums and activities. This process is destructive for the individuals involved and self-defeating for the university as well. The message conveyed to visit teams was similar everywhere: The supply of commitment capital is finite and dwindling; nurture what you have and enable it to grow. In other words, what is needed is a concept of commitment capital that focuses on providing an environment where healthy growth and renewal can occur.

Particularly disturbing to the teams was evidence that research institutions were often unwilling to acknowledge fully that the levels of commitment being asked of people of color is often incompatible with individual achievement. All too often, those identified as having potential to bring change are asked to behave--for the good of the whole--in ways that call for nothing less than the sacrifice of individual careers. To our knowledge, this practice has been in place and indeed recognized for what it is for years, yet few of our

institutions have moved to adapt policies to provide alternative routes to achievement within our setting.

It is possible that this dilemma will not be fully resolved until there is a substantial increase in the sheer numbers of persons of color on our campuses in every conceivable setting. Prior to that time, it is essential that our institutions exercise some restraint in what they require, and that people of color be encouraged to understand what participation in the system is likely to cost them personally and professionally. This is a situation in which effective mentoring can help to bring balance to the equation of institutional demands with personal dedication.

UNIVERSITIES SHOULD UTILIZE THE TALENTS AND DEDICATION OF THE LEADERS FOR CHANGE ON YOUR CAMPUS, BUT THEY MUST MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THOSE WHO GIVE SO GENEROUSLY TO THE INSTITUTION TO DO SO WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL FUTURES.

Conclusion

All of these crucial behaviors point to several important conclusions: The argument that we cannot afford more programs and thus cannot do anything to improve the campus climate for undergraduate students of color seems less than compelling when one understands the important role that institutional and individual behaviors, processes, and attitudes play in promoting change. While it is possible that the practices outlined above might require some expenditures in providing more useful and timely data, for example, they also offer the possibility of being able to consolidate, reorient, refine or eliminate approaches that are not working. This entire project was grounded on the astute initial observation that every Alliance institution had invested heavily in programs that were considered to be state-of-the-art in supporting success for students of color and still had too little to show for it. We would not for a moment underestimate the value of many programs for undergraduate students of color, and if the suggestions in this document are followed, each institution will have the opportunity to learn which ones they are.

What is also clear is that it is possible to discern nonproductive behaviors and positive, supportive ones, but a model approach that can work in all cases is elusive. Underlying all of the practices discussed above are some very fundamental ideas that we often lose sight of in the pressured environment of the contemporary university: the value of listening, empathy for another person's point of view, understanding for the stresses precipitated by rapid change, and personal and professional responsibility. Thus, while there

is no magic cure, we believe that there are precepts to follow that will allow us to become far more successful than we have been up to now in improving the potential for success for all members of our university communities.

We would close by stressing again a point made at the beginning of this report: It is within the underlying values, structures, and processes that shape the culture of an institution that one will find the means for promoting and achieving diversity on a campus. Some might view this point as an obvious truism; others, as a daunting if not downright intimidating prospect, given the size and complexity of our institutions. However, if one thing is clear from our site-visit experiences it is that formulaic or program-based approaches alone will not suffice in bringing to our campuses the enriching, desirable, and vital qualities of diversity. As valuable and necessary as programs and special approaches are, they must be viewed properly as an important means to achieving a larger, more broadly encompassing whole--not, as is all too often the case, as ends unto themselves, or as institutional affirmations of "having addressed the issue" of diversity. Our experiences in the field tell us two things: (1) in striving to achieve diversity, it is absolutely crucial for an institution to examine and deal with its values, structures, and processes in a serious, open, and positive manner; and (2) the means for doing this are available; what is often lacking is the will. The crucial practices we have outlined here are intended to help institutions marshal both the will and the means to achieve whatever goals they wish to set for themselves in this area.

APPENDIX

A. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE: THE ALLIANCE SITE VISIT PROCESS

The site visit process evolved from testing a self-study instrument to something that more closely resembled an external review whereby Alliance site visit teams provided direct feedback on observations made during the visit. The Alliance generally did not focus on the concept of *evaluation* to describe what it was doing, and the visits were not generally concerned with specific programs. The detailed review of individual programs deserves a level of specific expertise and attention to detail that is not possible in the time allotted to an institutional visit. Rather, the Alliance was concerned with the overall effort made by a campus, how programs fit within a larger conceptual and structural framework.

Description of the Process

Once an institution had identified possible dates for the visit and indicated any particular needs for representation on the visiting team, the Alliance executive director, who served as the team coordinator and liaison between the team and the institution, constructed a team, often in consultation with the most experienced team members. Every effort was made to meet the following criteria: (1) to have either an administrative or working group representative from the host university participate on a site visit to another institution prior to inviting a team to campus; (2) to include on the team at least one project member with experience on multiple visits and, ideally, in hosting a visit; (3) to include one relatively new member, to learn the process and possibly also in anticipation of hosting a visit; and (4) to include a member of the Alliance Board of Governors.

Once the dates were set and a team had been formed, the host, usually in consultation with the team or team coordinator, set up interviews according to guidelines proposed by the team. The exact mix of interviewees varied somewhat depending upon the institution involved, but the team always requested a meeting with the president or chancellor, the provost or senior academic officer, and students of color, preferably by group. Other interviewees typically included deans, faculty senate leaders, directors of admission and financial aid, affirmative action officers, minority and student affairs administrators, faculty and administrators of color, leaders (sometimes entire memberships) of special task forces related to diversity agendas, minority program directors, regents or trustees, development officers, and others. The interview with the president or chancellor was considered essential because (1) it was important that he or she understand what the Alliance effort was trying to accomplish on campus and (2) it was critical for the team to understand this

leader's vision for the institution, his or her understanding of the problems of people of color within the academic community, and where diversity goals fit in an overall personal and leadership agenda. The interviews with the students, who generally were grouped by ethnicity, were almost always the most valuable interviews for the team. The students provided the personal, experiential information about what it was like to be a student on a particular campus at a particular time. It was also important to talk with administrators and faculty who were committed and eager to deal with a diverse student body, as well as with those who longed for the more homogeneous campus of an earlier era. All were stakeholders in how the institution approached the challenge of diversity and how successful it was proving to be in meeting the needs of undergraduate students of color.

Exchange of information. Immediately prior to the visit, the host prepared a substantial packet of materials for advance reading by the team (see exhibit A). Several weeks in advance, and once the interviews were set, the team coordinator forwarded advance questionnaires to be completed by those to be interviewed; there was one form for students, another for faculty/staff/administrators (exhibits B and C). Usually the host administrative or working group representative distributed the questionnaires and provided a brief explanation of the purpose of the visit if that had not been covered in the initial scheduling of interview appointments. Ideally, the responses to the questionnaires were sent directly to the Alliance office, although there were times when they were collected by the institutional representative(s) to the Alliance. Returning the completed questionnaires directly to the Alliance office provided the greatest possible confidentiality, while the personal contact provided by their colleagues could encourage individuals to respond; obviously, this varied from setting to setting. However they were collected, once in hand they were shared confidentially with the visit team members in preparation for the visit itself.

The visit. The team typically arrived the day before the interviews began and spent an evening session with their Alliance hosts discussing last minute changes, going over the schedule for background information on the interviewees, and being briefed on any late-breaking issues on campus. The hosts played an extremely important role in getting the team off to a good start by providing them with relevant background. At the same time, the team needed to understand the host's perspective and expectations for the visit. It was often the case that the Alliance host representatives occupied positions vital to the information-gathering process; thus the Alliance team interviewed them as they would any other interviewee.

Once the interviews began (interview days were usually ten to twelve hours long), the team saw little of their Alliance hosts until the interviews were completed. Normally, the team spent the evening of the first day talking over their impressions and identifying issue areas in need of further clarification. The evening of the second day was spent with the Alliance hosts as a final opportunity to clarify relationships, institutional procedures, and so on. Finally, the team members devoted the morning of the day following the final interviews to reviewing the interviews and their overall impressions, and developing a set of recommendations or conclusions, depending upon the extent of reporting requested by the hosts.

The report. Based on the extensive debriefing session, her own notes and observations, and the information supplied by the institution, the Alliance executive director prepared a draft report for review and discussion by the team members. Once revisions had been completed, the draft report was shared with the Alliance hosts, who reviewed it for factual errors only. Following that discussion, the revised report was submitted as agreed upon.

Evolution of the Instruments

The concise interview instruments presented in Exhibits A through E we believe fully explore the issues of climate, attitude, vision, leadership, and so on that are critical to our understanding of our environments and how they facilitate or hinder the success of undergraduate students of color. The instruments include a checklist of materials to be supplied to the team ahead of time; an advance questionnaire for undergraduate students; an advance questionnaire for faculty, staff, and administrators; a set of core interview questions that we focused on during the actual interviews; and an exit interview.

EXHIBIT A

ADVANCE MATERIALS:

To be supplied **in advance** by the Alliance representatives at the University of ----------

(1) mission statement

(2) demographic profile on students

(3) institutional fact sheet

(4) copy of any action plan, mandate, manifesto, etc., that describes the current diversity agenda for the institution

(5) retention data and graduation data broken down by ethnic group, campuswide 10 yrs., not less than 5, no greater the 10 (see enclosed charts)

(6) Issues that are currently the focus of attention on campus

(7) Institutional organization chart showing full administrative structure

(8) Governance chart w/roles of Faculty Senate, trustees, etc.

(9) What programs, initiatives or services directly support your diversity agenda?

(10) Is there any individual or unit that collects data on these programs as to their names, purpose, reporting relationship, funding base, etc.?

If yes, what is done with the information/how is the information utilized? If feasible, would you take an organization chart and pencil in the reporting relationships?

Please provide copies for each member of the team if possible, preferably all on standard 8 1/2 by 11:

EXHIBIT B

ADVANCE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Alliance for Undergraduate Education
University of ------- Site Visit

1. What is your understanding of the University of -------'s diversity agenda?

   What is the University trying to achieve?

   How is the institution going about achieving its agenda?

   What is your part in it?

2. As you look at your life at the University, what are the major factors in the institution's diversity agenda that contribute to your success in advancing your academic goals?

3. What interferes with your ability to advance your academic goals?

4. What are the things in this institution that contribute to advancing the diversity agenda? What detracts?

5. What <u>one</u> change do you think would have the greatest impact in advancing the diversity agenda?

6. Please give us your personal assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your institutional climate (nature of human interaction on campus, attitudes toward diversity, etc.).

7. In your judgment, which major assumptions and policies affect the attainment of the diversity agenda at the University of -------?

8. Briefly describe programs or services in which you participate that support the diversity agenda.

EXHIBIT C

ADVANCE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS, FACULTY, AND STAFF

Alliance for Undergraduate Education
University of ---------- Site Visit

Please provide a brief description of your institution's diversity agenda in the spaces provided and return to the Alliance office in the attached envelope.

1. If there is no stated agenda, how would you characterize your institution's interest in promoting diversity?

2. Who are the principal stakeholders, i.e., the offices, groups, positions, or constituents for whom the agenda is important from a positive or negative viewpoint.

3. Which offices or individuals have primary responsibility for advancing diversity on your campus?

4. What elements in the local, state, and campus culture facilitate or inhibit the achievement of the University of -------'s diversity agenda? Consider issues such as basic values related to change, human relations, centralization vs. decentralization, governance, organizational structure, perceptions of the role of the university, etc.

5. Please give us your personal assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your institutional climate (nature of human interaction on campus, attitudes toward diversity, etc.).

6. In your judgment, which major assumptions and policies affect the attainment of the diversity agenda at the University of -------?

7. Briefly describe programs or services for which you have responsibility that support the diversity agenda.

EXHIBIT D

CORE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Alliance for Undergraduate Education
University of ------- Site Visit

1. What is your understanding of the University of -------'s diversity agenda?

   What is the university trying to achieve?

   How is the institution going about achieving its agenda?

   What is your part in it?

2. As you look at your work, what are the major factors that contribute to your success in advancing the institution's diversity agenda?

3. What interferes with your ability to advance the institutional agenda?

4. What are the things in this institution that contribute to advancing the diversity agenda? What detracts?

5. What <u>one</u> change do you think would have the greatest impact in advancing the diversity agenda?

EXHIBIT E
EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE
Alliance for Undergraduate Education
University of -------- Site Visit
------1992

As we conclude this interview, we would like to ask you give to your evaluation of each of the following items according to the scale given. Please circle the best choice for each item.

The following elements are generally considered important in advancing any agenda. In terms of the University of -------'s diversity agenda, how personally satisfied are you with each of these elements as currently practiced? (1 = not satisfied at all; 2 = not very satisfied; 3 = somewhat satisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)

Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Coordination of effort	1	2	3	4	5
Allocation of resources to support the effort	1	2	3	4	5
Evaluation of effort	1	2	3	4	5
Accountability for specific results	1	2	3	4	5
Trust	1	2	3	4	5
Commitment/will	1	2	3	4	5
Action/results	1	2	3	4	5
Institutionalization of effort	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-based involvement	1	2	3	4	5
Communication about progress	1	2	3	4	5
Clarity of the agenda	1	2	3	4	5

EXHIBIT E
EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE (cont.)

Are there any other comments you would like to make concerning the diversity agenda? About anything else?

As we analyze these responses, it would be helpful for us to know your place in the university structure:

Are you a student? ____ *A faculty member?* ____ *An administrator?* ___

Other ___ *Years at institution* ____

What is your current position? (optional) _____

Gender (optional)? ____ *Ethnicity (optional)?* ____

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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